

### Software Freedom Day (SFD)

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Over 500 volunteer groups in over 120 countries all around the world are celebrating the fifth Software Freedom Day this year on September 20. Software Freedom Day is an annual grass roots effort to educate the public on the virtues of Free/Open Source Software (FOSS) and also to encourage its use. Free software movement is a philosophical movement which values freedom, collaboration, community and transparency; it benefits the public good and ensures basic human freedoms are strengthened by technology, not hampered.

In Nepal, Software Freedom Day is being celebrated since 2005. The Free/Open Source Software (FOSS) Community Nepal (FOSS-Nepal) organizes several events to mark this day. Last year, FOSS Nepal community was one of the three global winners of best SFD event. Our theme for SFD this year is "Create, Share, Collaborate."

### FOSS Nepal Community

FOSS Nepal Community (<http://fossnepal.org/>) is established by a team of those enthusiastic people who believe in the usage of Free/Open Source Software. The prime aim of FOSS Nepal community is to promote and diversify the usage of Free/Open Source Software in the country.

1. To raise awareness among government bodies, private sector, civil society, educational institutions and media for expanding the scope of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) via Free and Open Source Software.
2. To sensitize the government bodies, civil society and media for the implementation of e-governance by means of FOSS; the optimal solution for e-government.
3. Advocacy for alternatives in Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) specific to ICT.
4. To enhance the capacity of IT professionals by promoting inclusion of Free and Open Source Softwares in educational system and providing platform for IT professionals to make them globally saleable.

### Why Free and Open Source Software?

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The concept of Free/Open Source Softwares has great promise for developing countries. It provides an opportunity to harness the benefit of development in ICT to these nations at low or minimal cost. Linux, OpenOffice.org, Mozilla etc are the common examples of these highly useful and entirely free software. The Free and Open Source Softwares also promote communities of collaboration which in turn foster local IT industries in developing regions without the need for large up-front investments. The freedom of software is important for everyone, not just software developers.

The Free and Open Source Software philosophy works on distributed development model with the participation of thousands of developers around the world. FOSS evolves on the contribution of these developer communities. Free/open source softwares are released along with source code under the different licenses to the public. The release of the source code allows external observers to inspect the true functioning of the program, which means that the end user can be confident that the program treats his/her private data with respect. These FOSS licenses also give permission to the end user to use the software as per his/her requirements and to distribute it. It also gives him/her permission to build on this source code and redistribute it either in the original or in the modified form.

### How SFD is being celebrated in Nepal?

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The Software Freedom Day in Nepal is being marked by a series of events on September 19 and 20, 2008, such as:

### September 19:

- Solidarity Rally (Tinkune-Maitighar) with a “free or freeze” event (our rally will pass through the pavement): 5 PM
- Candlelight vigil at Maitighar Mandala from 6 PM

### September 20:

- Movie shows,
- An interaction program with journalists, titled “Free Media for a Free Society”
- Distribution/Sale of FOSS promotional material (CDs, T-shirts)
- Experts' Session
- Open Hardware and Robotics workshop
- Release of a web portal that enables local talents to create, share and collaborate on their work
- FOSS Declaration

## Please be There

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**Venue:** Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka, Lalitpur

**Date:** September 20, 2008 (Ashwin 4, 2065)

**Time:** 10:30 AM – 4:00 PM